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GENDERED TERMS, PROVERBS, AND IDIOMS IN ENGLISH AND UZBEK: A CONTRASTIVE STUDY

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Abstract

This study compares how gender is represented in English and Uzbek gendered terms, proverbs, and idioms. English marks gender grammatically and lexically, while Uzbek has no grammatical gender and expresses it mainly through vocabulary, kinship terms, and proverbs. Since fixed expressions pass stereotypes from one generation to the next, comparing them reveals the cultural values each language carries. Data are collected from dictionaries, proverb collections, and corpora (BNC, COCA), then analyzed through contrastive analysis, thematic classification, and critical discourse analysis. Based on earlier research, an imbalance is expected in both languages, with more restrictive expressions about women. The findings will add Uzbek data to contrastive linguistics and sociolinguistics and support translation, language teaching, and gender-sensitive materials.

Keywords

gender; contrastive linguistics; proverbs; idioms; English; Uzbek; stereotypes .

This study looks at how men and women are talked about in the fixed expressions of two very different languages: English and Uzbek. I focus on three kinds of expressions: gendered words, proverbs, and idioms. The aim is to see what each language says about men and women, which stereotypes are built into these phrases, and what cultural values sit behind them.

The two languages handle gender quite differently. English marks it openly, with *he* and *she*, or *actor* and *actress*. Uzbek has no grammatical gender and uses one pronoun, *u*, for everyone.[114]So in Uzbek, gender shows up less in grammar and more in vocabulary, kinship terms, and proverbs, which makes the comparison interesting.

[114] Corbett, G. G. (1991). *Gender*. Cambridge University Press.

Proverbs and idioms are easy to overlook, but they quietly pass ideas about "how men and women should be" from one generation to the next.[115] Most people use them without thinking about what they actually imply.

There is also a gap in the research. English is already changing, with words like *chairperson* and the singular *they* becoming common, but Uzbek has received far less attention in this area.[116] At the same time, social media is bringing English expressions into everyday Uzbek speech, which raises a fair question: are stereotypes travelling along with the words? Since very few contrastive gender studies include Uzbek, this topic can add something new.

The main aim is to find and compare how gender is represented in English and Uzbek terms, proverbs, and idioms.

To get there, the study will:

1. Collect gendered expressions from dictionaries and proverb collections in both languages.

2. Sort them by theme, such as family, work, character, appearance, and morality.

3. Decide whether each one casts men or women in a positive, negative, or neutral light.

4. Compare the results and explain the differences through each culture's context.

Along the way, the study tries to answer a few questions. Which gender is mentioned more often, and more negatively, in each language? What themes tend to be attached to women and what themes to men? And how much do the two cultures actually agree?

The data would come from dictionaries of idioms and proverbs and from corpora such as the BNC and COCA for English, and from published proverb collections and explanatory dictionaries for Uzbek.

The analysis combines several approaches. A contrastive analysis compares equivalent and non-equivalent expressions across the two languages.[117] Each item is then classified by meaning and theme, and a critical discourse analysis helps uncover the attitudes hidden underneath.[118] Simple frequency counts show how often each theme and each type of evaluation appears. If time allows, a short

[115]Mieder, W. (2004). *Proverbs: A Handbook*. Greenwood Press.
[116] Hellinger, M., &Bußmann, H. (Eds.). (2001–2003). *Gender Across Languages* (Vols. 1–3). John Benjamins.
[117]Krzeszowski, T. P. (1990). *Contrasting Languages: The Scope of Contrastive Linguistics*. Mouton de Gruyter.
[118] Fairclough, N. (1995). *Critical Discourse Analysis*. Longman.

student questionnaire could add a perception angle, showing how young people today react to these expressions.

The study has not been carried out yet, so these are not real findings. They are expectations based on earlier research, and they should be replaced with your own data once you have it.

Based on previous work, both languages will probably show an imbalance, with more negative or restrictive expressions about women. This pattern is often called the "semantic derogation of women."[119] English will likely show more gender marking in job titles and word forms (*waitress*, *policeman*), while Uzbek will probably lean on proverbs and kinship terms. The themes may differ too: Uzbek proverbs might stress family roles, modesty, and household duties, while English expressions might focus more on talkativeness, personality, and looks. Some expressions will have near-identical counterparts in both languages, pointing to shared patriarchal views, and others will be unique to one culture.

On the scientific side, the study adds Uzbek data to contrastive linguistics, sociolinguistics, and linguoculturology. It also lets us test well-known theories from Lakoff, Butler, and West and Zimmerman on a language outside the usual Western focus.[120]

On the practical side, the results can help translators and English teachers who want to bring cultural awareness into their work. They can also feed into dictionaries and teaching materials that avoid gender bias, and they give schools and media a firmer basis for talking about gender-sensitive language.

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